

# The University of North Carolina Office of the President

## SELECTION GUIDELINES

### Reviewing the Application

In reviewing employment applications, consider the following factors:

- Years of experience – An applicant’s years of work experience are not always a strong indicator of that applicant’s potential. After 10 years in a job, some people are performing at the same level as when they were hired, while others will have grown in the job and have expanded their responsibilities. When reviewing an application you should focus on the applicant’s level of responsibility in addition to years of experience.
- Frequent job changes (without career advancement) – Frequent job changes are sometimes made for reasons of career advancement and may not necessarily reflect negatively on the applicant. However, switching jobs every year (or less) throughout a career can be a sign of problem behavior, especially if the applicant makes frequent job changes that do not advance his or her career. Such changes could indicate that the applicant was pressured to find new jobs because of poor performance or that he or she is not certain of what career to pursue. Both of these problems can be related to job skill and motivation.
- Gaps in employment history – Looking for employment gaps is an important part of application screening. You should not assume that employment gaps are necessarily caused by the applicant’s incompetence or inability to hold a job. Gaps can occur for the following reasons:
  - Staff reductions (non performance related)
  - Spouse job change
  - Return to school
  - Time off to start a family
  - Health problems
  - Extended vacation
  - Sabbatical
  - Career change

Because there can be many valid reasons for employment gaps, you should not use an employment gap to automatically screen out an otherwise strong applicant. However, you should explore an employment gap thoroughly before making a job offer.

- Education, degrees, certifications and other credentials – Credentials should be used as a criterion for application screening. However before using the lack of a degree or certificate as a reason to eliminate an applicant, make sure that the credential was advertised as a minimum or preferred qualification for the job.. Often an applicant has the knowledge and skills needed to be effective in a job even though he/she does not have a formal degree or certificate. In such cases, you should consider the applicant’s equivalent combination of education and experience.

- Achievements and awards – Achievements and awards can indicate a person’s level of initiative. Some people set low goals for themselves and achieve little. Others have a record of outstanding accomplishments, starting in youth and continuing through their work history.

➤

### **Sorting the Applications**

- Sorting applications helps you focus on the most qualified applicants without being distracted by applicants who don’t fit the job requirements. The following is a suggested sorting model:
  - Group 1 – highly qualified applicants who meet the minimum as well as some or all of the preferred requirements for the position and should be given further consideration
  - Group 2 – applicants who meet the advertised minimum requirements and can be considered if the applicants in group #1 don’t work out
  - Group 3 – Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for the position
- Screen and sort applications according to qualifications
- Determine the most qualified applicants and rank in order
- Decide how many of the most qualified applicants to invite for an interview.

### **Preparing for the Interview**

- Review the job description and work plan for the position. You need to learn as much as possible about the requirements of the job to be filled, the specific demands of the position and the working conditions, in order to structure the interview to obtain relevant information. List the specific tasks performed on the job, and decide which of the tasks are critical to performance of that position. Also list methods, techniques, tools, equipment, and work aids used to accomplish these tasks.
- Identify the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the specific tasks performed on the job. Based on previous employees’ success, list the qualifications you believe to be essential to success on the job. List those qualifications that unsuccessful employees failed to learn and develop while on the job.
- Draft questions to be asked in the applicant interviews. Questions should address the knowledge, skills and abilities required for a new employee to be successful on the job.
- Review the application and any attached documents to identify areas where you would like additional information or clarification from the applicant. It is recommended that this review be conducted prior to the interview so that you are familiar with the application and do not need to refer to it constantly during the interview.
- When developing interview questions, make sure that the questions are:
  - job related!
  - drawn directly from the job description/work plan
  - based on “essential functions” of the job
  - not leading the applicant to your preferred answer
  - not biased toward a particular gender, race, etc.

The following are some general interview guidelines:

- Use the same questions and the same format for all interviews
- Treat all applicants with fairness, equality and consistency
- Discuss the UNC OP/GA mission, programs and achievements
- Discuss the duties and responsibilities of the job
- Discuss the applicant's qualifications, abilities, experience, education and interests

### **Conducting the Interview**

- Greet the applicant, giving your name and position
- Explain the purpose of the interview:
  - To acquaint interviewer and applicant
  - To learn more about the applicant's background and experience
  - To help the applicant understand the position and organization
- Provide an overview of what will be covered in the interview:
  - Review applicant's work experience and knowledge, skills, and abilities
  - Ask applicant questions to elicit specific information about work experiences and knowledge, skills, and abilities
  - Provide applicant information about the position and organization
  - Answer applicant's questions about the position and organization
  - Indicate that you will be taking notes
- Explain the job's essential functions and ask if the applicant can perform the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation

Sample General Interview Questions:

- What were your most important achievements in your current job?
- To date, what have been some of your more important work responsibilities?
- How do you plan and organize your work?
- What are your career objectives?
- Why would you like to work at UNC Office of the President and General Administration?

Please see Pre-Employment Inquiries for guidelines for inquiries that are permissible during the hiring phase and those that must be avoided to remain in compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

[http://intranet.northcarolina.edu/docs/hr/forms/Permissisibile\\_\\_Impermissible.pdf](http://intranet.northcarolina.edu/docs/hr/forms/Permissisibile__Impermissible.pdf)

### **Checking References**

Reference checking is the responsibility of the hiring manager. Prior to contacting references, the hiring manager must request permission from the applicant. Pre-employment references solicited by the UNC Office of the President and General Administration are confidential and may not be released to the applicant, employee or public (under NC General Statute 126). Suggested questions include:

1. Has this employee:
  - Usually been on time for work?
  - Except for illness or vacation, been excessively absent (more than 10 days)?
  - Received an oral or written warning for performance or conduct in the last year? If yes, please explain.

- Engaged in serious misconduct while on the job?
  - Met or exceeded requirements as to quantity of work?
  - Met or exceeded requirements as to quality of work?
  - Required close supervision?
  - Cooperated with fellow employees and supervisors?
2. What is the reason this employee is leaving?
  3. Would you rehire (or like to retain) this individual? If no, why?
  4. What further information can you provide to assist us in evaluating this applicant?